

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY BISSAU

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, MILL, GV, SGIV

SUBJECT: FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INR/RAF SPECIAL ANALYSIS ON

"SOVIET-GUINEAN-US RELATIONS", AUGUST 4, 1976

1. PRESIDENT TOURE'S ASSURANCES THAT SOVIET LONG-RANGE
RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT (TU-95 BEARS) WILL STOP USING
GUINEAN AIRFIELDS BY THE END OF THIS MONTH PROBABLY
REFLECT AN EFFORT BY TOURE TO:

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(A)--PERSUADE THE US OF GUINEA'S STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT;

(B)--BUILD A STRONG CASE FOR INCREASED PL 480 ASSISTANCE IN A YEAR WHEN GUINEA'S FOOD PROSPECTS ARE GRIM; AND

(C)--GET OUT FROM UNDER A LOPSIDED DEPENDENCE ON THE USSR.

2. IN INFORMING EMBASSY CONAKRY OF THE DECISION, THE GUINEAN GOVERNMENT ALSO REQUESTED A "SECURITY GUARANTY"

TO PROTECT IT AGAINST EXTERNAL INVASIONS FROM THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OF SENEGAL AND IVORY COAST.

3. SOVIET-GUINEAN RELATIONS HAVE FLUCTUATED WIDELY OVER THE YEARS. THERE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN FRICTIONS OVER:

(A)--SOVIET UNWILLINGNESS TO PAY THE WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR BAUXITE MINED AT THE KINDIA PROJECT, WHICH WAS DEVELOPED BY THE SOVIETS AND HAS BEEN THEIR MAJOR AID PROJECT IN GUINEA;

(0)--MOSCOW'S CONDITIONS ON ITS OFFER TO BUILD AN INSTALLATION FOR THE GUINEAN NAVY ON TAMARA ISLAND, OFF CONAKRY; THE GUINEANS EVENTUALLY REJECTED THE SOVIET PROPOSAL, WHICH PROVIDED FOR EXCLUSIVE USE OF PART OF THE ISLAND FOR SOVIET NAVAL PURPOSES.

4. THE RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS ARE USEFUL STRATEGICALLY TO THE SOVIET UNION AND IT WOULD PREFER BOTH TO CONTINUE THEM AND TO ESTABLISH A RIGHT TO USE A GUINEAN AIRFIELD REGULARLY AS A BASE FOR NAVAL AIR RECONNAISSANCE. NEVERTHELESS, IF THE SOVIETS WERE UNDER PRESSURE TO PAY AN ONEROUS PRICE FOR THE FLIGHTS, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY TOOK A DECISION TO TERMINATE THE ARRANGEMENT. IN ANY EVENT, A DEPLOYMENT HAS RECENTLY ENDED AND UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT RETURN TO CONAKRY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. THIS TIMING GIVES TOURE A MARGIN OF TIME IN WHICH TO MANEUVER.

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5. MOREOVER, THE SOVIETS MAY HAVE OTHER ALTERNATIVES IN WEST AFRICA, NOTABLY MALI AND GUINEA-BISSAU.

(A)--THE SOVIET DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER RECENTLY VISITED MALI, AND OUR EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SOVIET ACCESS TO MALIAN AIRFIELDS MAY HAVE BEEN THE MAIN SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION.

(U)--ANOTHER RECENT REPORT INDICATES THAT THE AIRFIELD AT BISSAU IS UNDERGOING MAJOR CONSTRUCTION, BUT WE DO NOT KNOW ITS PRESENT CAPABILITY. THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONAL UNCONFIRMED REPORTS IN THE PAST OF SOVIET INTEREST IN USING FACILITIES IN GUINEA-BISSAU.

IN ADDITION TO THE REPRESENTATIONS BY THE US THE CHINESE HAVE ALSO EXERTED PRESSURE ON THE GUINEANS ABOUT THE EXTENSIVE SOVIET PRESENCE. EARLIER THIS

YEAR, PEKING LINKED ITS CANCELLATION OF A SALE OF 5,000 TONS OF RICE WITH A PROTEST AGAINST GROWING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN CONAKRY. TOURE MAY HAVE CONCLUDED THAT HE HAD TIPPED THE BALANCE TOO FAR IN MOSCOW'S DIRECTION.

7. SOME ASPECTS OF THE GUINEAN PRESENTATION TO EMBASSY CONAKRY ARE SUSPICIOUS, HOWEVER. ONE IS THE GUINEAN CONTENTION THAT THE DEPLOYMENTS HAD ENDED BY "EARLY 1976" (WHEN EMBASSY CONAKRY FIRST BEGAN TO PROTEST THE USE OF GUINEAN TERRITORY FOR AN OPERATION DIRECTED AGAINST US STRATEGIC INTERESTS). WHILE THE GUINEANS HAVE NO CAPABILITY TO MONITOR SOVIET FLIGHT PATTERNS, THE BEAR AIRCRAFT ARE EASILY OBSERVABLE AT CONAKRY AIRPORT.

8. MOREOVER, TOURE'S ASSURANCES THAT HE HAD ORIGINALLY REQUESTED THE FLIGHTS IN 1973 BECAUSE GUINEA FEARED ANOTHER INVASION FROM THE EA DO NOT RING TRUE. TOURE'S REQUEST FOR SOVIET PROTECTION FROM SEABORNE ASSAULTS OCCURRED IN NOVEMBER 1970, AFTER THE PORTUGUESE-BACKED INVASION IN THAT MONTH. THE SOVIET RESPONSE WAS TO SEND A SMALL NAVAL TASK FORCE TO PATROL GUINEAN WATERS. DESPITE TOURE'S CLAIM THAT HE NOW NO LONGER FEARS AN
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OFFSHORE ATTACK, THE GUINEAN PRESENTATION TO EMBASSY CONAKRY DID NOT MENTION THAT THE SOVIET NAVAL PATROL IS CONTINUING.

9. TOURE GENUINELY BELIEVES THAT THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OF IVORY COAST AND SENEGAL ARE FACILITATING THE EFFORT OF GUINEAN EXILES TO OVERTHROW HIM. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE HIS FEARS.

10. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE, THAT TOURE IS CONVINCED THAT US LEVERAGE ON ABIDJAN AND DAKAR (AND PARIS) IS SUFFICIENTLY GREAT THAT A WORD OF CAUTION IN THESE CAPITALS WOULD DETER FURTHER EFFORTS DIRECTED AGAINST HIS REGIMES. TOURE'S REQUEST FOR A SECURITY GUARANTY TO PROTECT HIM AGAINST SUCH ATTACKS MAY BE A PLOY. IF HE DEEM

OUR RESPONSE UNSATISFACTORY, HE WILL BE ABLE TO CLAIM
THAT ONLY THE USSR IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIM THE SECURITY
ASISTANCE REQUIRED FOR HIS PROTECTION. HABIB

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